

# Understanding Public Comment: How Your Comments are Used in 1915(c) Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) Waiver Redesign

Kentucky Department for Medicaid Services  
December 2018

This document is a timeline of stakeholder engagement activities that began in the Spring of 2017 and how the comments collected during those activities have been used and will continue to be used to guide 1915(c) HCBS waiver redesign.

**April 2017**

The Department for Medicaid Services (the Department) introduced the need for 1915(c) HCBS waiver redesign.

**June 2017**

The Department began public outreach efforts. The Department established [medicaidpubliccomment@ky.gov](mailto:medicaidpubliccomment@ky.gov) email box to gather comments, questions, and concerns from stakeholders.

**September  
2017**

The Department held stakeholder focus groups across the state with more than 480 attendees.

**April 2018**

The Department released Navigant's preliminary assessment report on the 1915(c) HCBS waiver programs. The recommendations were based on public comment and assessment of current 1915(c) HCBS waiver applications for federal compliance. The Department requested stakeholder comments on the recommendations through email, phone calls, and in writing.

**May 2018**

The Department conducted town halls to educate stakeholders about what the recommendations meant and how those recommendations may affect them. The Department asked for public testimony about the recommendations and continued to receive comments to the [medicaidpubliccomment@ky.gov](mailto:medicaidpubliccomment@ky.gov) mailbox.

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September  
2018

The Department released Navigant's Final Assessment Report on the 1915(c) HCBS waiver programs.

October  
2018

The Department released a response to Navigant's Final Assessment Report on the 1915(c) HCBS waiver programs.

November  
2018

The Department created the Home and Community Based Services Advisory Panel (HCBS-AP) and three topic specific subpanels comprised of participants, caregivers, providers, etc. The HCBS-AP and subpanels will advise the Department on improvements to the 1915(c) HCBS waivers.

December  
2018

The Department held the first HCBS-AP and subpanel meetings. The Department also released a Public Notice to inform stakeholders about the upcoming official public comment period and a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) document to help answer stakeholder questions about 1915(c) HCBS waiver redesign.

January 7,  
2019

The Department will release **drafts** of the amendments to the 1915(c) HCBS waiver applications. **These drafts are not final and can be revised once the official public comment period ends.** Stakeholders will be able to view the drafts and send their feedback to the Department for consideration. The Department will summarize the comments it receives and respond to them before submitting the final waiver applications to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) for approval.

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January 7,  
2019  
(Cont'd)

The Department will release drafts of the amended 1915(c) HCBS waivers and provide educational opportunities for stakeholders as well. Those opportunities include:

- 1) Summary of Changes: The Department will provide stakeholders with a summary of changes for each waiver and what those changes will mean to stakeholders.
- 2) Webinars: The Department will hold a series of educational webinars to provide an overview of the changes that will most directly affect participants and providers. These will also be posted on the Division of Community Alternatives website to allow convenient viewing.

These educational opportunities allow stakeholders to make informed comments during the official public comment period.

The amended waiver application drafts to be released on January 7, 2019 will contain proposed changes that were formulated from stakeholder feedback and that are needed to address federal compliance requirements. This round of changes will contain more consistent processes and definitions across waivers, better ways to contact the Department and the Cabinet for Health and Family Services (the Cabinet), and organizational streamlining for more consistent administration of waivers.

February 6,  
2019 and  
beyond

The official public comment period ends on February 6, 2019. The Department will review the comments submitted during the official public comment period and adjust the draft waiver applications for submission to CMS. The Department will then have conversations with CMS to ensure federal compliance and approval.

The Department also plans to host Town Hall meetings, webinars, and use other documents to educate the stakeholders about the approved waivers and how those will be implemented. The Department has heard that, historically, once changes are finalized, there has been limited outreach to help stakeholders understand the changes. The Department is committed to ensuring stakeholders understand what will happen once the waivers receive final approval from CMS.